

HIRST KIDD and RENNIE LIMITED
ANNUAL STAMENT TO IPSO
(period September 8, 2014 - December 31, 2014)

INTRODUCTION

The above has been a family-owned business involved in newspapers for over 160 years. Its main title is the Oldham Evening Chronicle, an 8,000 circulation local news product sold mainly in the Oldham Metropolitan Borough. It also publishes a series of monthly titles under the "Extra" banner that covers the localities of Oldham, Saddleworth and neighbouring Tameside.

The Editor of the newspaper is David Whaley.

EDITORIAL STANDARDS

The newspaper has always prided itself on being an accurate reflection of life in Oldham and has never sought to be directly confrontational or sensational in any of its reporting.

Local news sources have to be dealt with time and again and the newspaper is very careful to build on this trust - both with the people who supply information and to the readership and the wider population beyond.

We have an experienced team on the News Desk and in the subbing team and they try to make sure that the tone of the products we produce is decent, honest and truthful.

We go to great lengths to achieve balance in any story we produce and will often hold back stories to make sure that comments are received from both sides rather than run allegations and then run counter-balance stories as a follow-up.

Very often this will lead to us not breaking a story first but we are determined to see fair play at the outset rather than playing catch-up.

To date, we have very little need to call upon the services of IPSO for editorial guidance though we would have no hesitation in doing so if our team felt that we might well be stepping over the boundaries we set ourselves and to make sure we stay within the Editors' Code.

COMPLAINTS-HANDLING

Our complaints-handling process begins with the Editor who will receive complaints from the readers either verbally via the telephone or in writing in emails and letter. Often these will come via the reporter concerned or the News Desk if the public has gone directly to them.

Our aim is always to involve the reporter, news desk and sub editor in any issues raised by the complaint so that they understand the nature of the complaint and the issues raised.

We always seek to deal with complaints in the next available issue.

Questions of accuracy where information has been wrongly interpreted are quickly put right.

I am pleased to say that during the last five years the newspaper has only three times followed the path of a formal complaint to the regulatory body and in each of those three cases the ruling was that there was no case to answer.

None of these were in the period being reported on.

The Editor's PA Maria Whitehead keeps a formal list of all complaints and their outcomes and the correspondence involved is kept with the Editor.

At present the products give readers a direct route to the Editor to make complaints (written or spoken) but does not supply readers with information on the IPSO complaints process. This is likely to change when the product undertakes a re-design when we install a new editorial and advertising system in the New Year.

TRAINING

Our News Desk delivers regular updates to all reporters but we are in the process of moving buildings in the coming months and once the operation is on a single floor it is hoped to be able to implement as more structured training programme.

DAVID WHALEY
Managing Editor
17-10-2015